Francophone Canadian voluntary
action organizations & their
relations with the federal
government

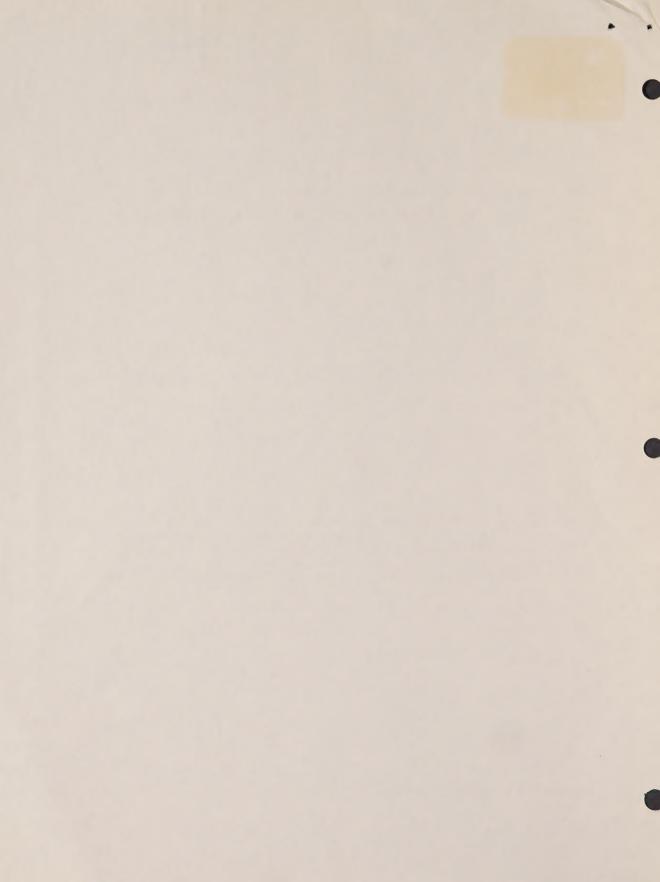# FRANCOPHONE CANADIAN VOLUNTARY ACTION ORGANIZATIONS
AND THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

by

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Introduction

This summary sets forth the principal highlights of a research project on francophone voluntary organizations in Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and New Brunswick. In addition, it brings out certain points which were implicit in the report through a synthesis of certain analyses of the research results.

Background

The ambiguous status of the organizations concerned, and the disparities among francophone communities, should be kept in mind when considering the information yielded by the research.

The ambiguous status of voluntary organizations arises not only from the difficulty in defining exactly what a voluntary organization is, but also from the common, simplistic view of today's society, held in many circles, which obscures the relationships between volunteer groups and the government.

The first problem, that of defining volunteerism, led us to restrict the sample of groups studied; organizations of the "democratic public administration" type such as school boards, of the "public watchdog" type such as the Bar Association, and of the "public planning" type such as regional economic councils, were excluded. Thus, the respondents to the various data gathering approaches used represent an arbitrarily selected portion of the vast sector of activities in our society which are out of working hours, non-profit and not dependent on commercialized recreation. The exclusion, motivated by the requirements of the research, of those organizations commonly called intermediary

bodies and of economic sector volunteers, does not really reduce
the ambiguity of status. This same ambiguity applies to the
government's concern as to its relations with voluntary groups.
By way of introduction, it will be remembered that the way in
which the government formulated the mandate of the National
Advisory Council on Voluntary Action, for whom this study was
conducted, implied a special role for government aid and
support and specified the nature of relations which were to exist
between the government and these groups. As well as constituting
one of the principal sources of unhappiness on the part of
organizations, this attitude also tends to oversimplify the
ambiguous state of relations between the public and private sectors,
which are at the heart of the question.

        This attitude corresponds to the government's desire to
take complete and sole rights to represent citizens. It is the
attitude not only of individuals in power, but also of the
institution. It is sustained by the usual complete withdrawal
from the public arena of the so-called private sector which
unilaterally appropriates for itself the fields of production
and consumption.

        In such a "perceptual" context, volunteer organizations
have an ambiguous status, both in their relations with government
and more generally in the set of current social perceptions
which divide our society into a private sector concerned with
production and consumption, and a public sector of political
and governmental activities, the principal functions of which
are often summed up as the maintenance of order, justice and
national defence, and assistance to the disadvantaged.   In

this view of reality, the voluntary sector is a paradox: it
is private in nature, yet neither consumes nor produces, and
it assumes a right to public sector functions and rights.
Under these circumstances, clarification of the status of the
voluntary sector necessitates a re-examination of the other
two sectors and their respective rights and duties. The research
data show that the volunteer organizations perceive the principal
problem in their relations with the government as resting in
this area. These data also indicate that the organizations do
not believe that their ambiguous status can change without a
reopening of this question. Finally, these data show that although
the groups identify this as the fundamental problem, they do
not believe that the institutions are able to tackle it without
an important shift in government and in general public attitudes.

Our research shows on the one hand that the respondents
believe that people's attitudes have not changed over the past
ten years and, on the other hand, that the leaders of the
groups themselves have a false perception of the economic
relations between government and the private sector. The latter
perception, which is probably shared by citizens as a whole,
including politicians and civil servants, is perpetuated by the
absence of data on the public sector.

The research data show, in fact, that 72% of respondents
overestimate the share of government revenues from direct
taxes on corporations, and that only 24% of respondents know
the exact ratio of the respective shares of individuals (72%)
and corporations (23%) in revenues. The perception of more than

one-quarter of respondents is the exact opposite of reality.
It may be presumed that these results correspond to those
which would be obtained from the population at large, from
civil servants and politicians themselves, since the leaders
of volunteer organizations are virtually as "well-informed" as
the latter.

To the extent that the illusion that a very large share
of government expenditures goes to social assistance, and that
the greatest share of government resources comes from private
corporations, is entertained, the ambiguity of the voluntary
sector's status is increased. In this perception of reality,
government funds solicited by the voluntary groups are not seen
as money from individual taxpayers, but rather as money from
the large private corporations redistributed by the State.
Both the ascendency of the economic sectors over the government,
which organizations see as in some way legitimate (if not justified)
and the fact that the individual is not seen as the principal
taxpayer, causes the voluntary sector, which is based on the
principle of grouping individuals together, to lose the position
in society which a correct understanding of the economic relations
between the private and public sectors could provide.

Voluntary groups are demanding first of all a change in
the government's attitude toward the value of citizen participation
in the "public domain", as well as toward the voluntary groups.
In the present situation, however, the groups cannot start from
a perception which would justify their demand according to the
principles of rights proportional to contributions. On the

contrary, they themselves may feel that they are going against these fundamental principles, a belief which all milieux probably tend to share. This faulty perception of reality hinders the willingness to question the relations between the private and public sectors which could result in a clarification of the status of the voluntary sector. Also, the underestimation of the economic contribution of the individual in public affairs reduces his "public" right and limits his role to the private sector of production and consumption: voluntary activities are thus devalued, as is volunteerism in general.

By isolating the voluntary sector for research purposes, and by retaining the "common" definitions of the public and private sectors, there is a risk that this background to the data gathered may be hidden; yet it is only against this background that the data may be interpreted.

The disparities among Canadian francophone communities is another important factor which must be kept in mind in order to interpret the data from this research.

The context of the creation and development of voluntary organizations is very different in different communities.

In Quebec, the context is one of a majority homogeneous culture and of community self-responsibility through a government native to this culture. Voluntary activities have diversified as economic development has created the necessary free time and as urbanization and state control of overall social and educational trends have redirected toward lay regional and provincial structures a voluntary sector which was previously parish-centred and Catholic. At present, the question of the survival of the

French Fact in Quebec is totally political in nature; furthermore there is unanimous support from all the provincial political parties for the special value of Quebec; there are differences only at the level of the means to be employed. For all practical purposes, the Quebec voluntary sector in its Quebec activities has developed without special emphasis on the survival of the French culture being a priority consideration.

In the other communities, the francophone voluntary sector is absorbed by the question of survival, and imbued with a last-chance atmosphere in communities where the minority is very small (Manitoba) or where the population is scattered (Ontario).

In these latter two francophone communities, the majority of volunteers' efforts are directed toward survival of the language in their own community. Volunteer activity is not very diversified (education, culture, direct assistance), and the clergy and elite play a dominant role. It is a case, in the very words of the leaders of volunteer organizations, of a voluntary sector born of necessity, whose development must take the route of assuring their community's future, with the latter depending in large part on federal government policies with regard to support for the French Fact in Canada.

In New Brunswick, voluntary action is carried out in a much more diversified way, in a context where the francophone community is a minority which is very sizeable provincially (nearly 40%) and geographically united. Thus in one area of the province it is effectively in the majority. Provincial French language policies and the emergence of an identifiable and productive Acadian culture allow this community to direct

its efforts toward the socioeconomic sectors of its development.
Survival of the French Fact remains a constant preoccupation,
but is no longer the only one mobilizing the voluntary sector.

With the qualified exception of Acadia, the francophone
community voluntary sector outside Quebec is centred around the
provincial francophone association, and its survival is directly
dependent on federal policies: recognition of the associations'
representative status, policies of support to French-speaking
communities. The Federation of Francophones Outside Quebec
was recently created with the goal of grouping the provincial
associations in order to press toward making demands in these
two policy areas and to collaborate.

The present state of the francophone voluntary sector and
the possibilities for development vary a great deal from one
community to another. In Quebec, volunteerism is diversified
in its areas of interest, and takes on new forms as it enters
into action; while groups often wish to claim to be representative
of minorities, they do so in the context of a homogeneous
cultural society of which the provincial state is representative.
In the other Canadian francophone communities, volunteerism
is first and foremost oriented toward the survival and development
of minorities in its area, in a province which seems rather hostile
and in a state of direct dependence on federal policies of
support for the French Fact, and not policies of support for
volunteerism. In the latter policy area, the voluntary sector
can obtain only what its status based on support from the
former policies permits it to demand.

Methodology

Since there is no complete list of volunteer organizations, either for Quebec or for the other provinces, it was impossible to choose a random sample representative of these associations. The sample of francophone associations is therefore "approximate", taking into account the region, 22 areas of interest, and the distinction between so-called advocacy and so-called "service" groups. The advocacy groups aim to change the status quo, whereas the service groups work toward improvements in living conditions. The sample selected had the following characteristics: national organizations (20%) versus local ones (80%); large urban centres (60%) versus small communities (40%); Quebec (76%) versus Ontario, New Brunswick and Manitoba (24%).

The information contained in this report comes from the replies from 53% of the sample, or 226 francophone volunteer organizations. Data were gathered by means of 146 written questionnaires, 80 telephone interviews, and 24 personal interviews. The telephone survey was used for groups which had not replied to the questionnaire and was intended to gather information supplementary to the questionnaire about the perceptions and attitudes of the groups. In the interviews (14 of which were conducted with leaders of Quebec organizations and 10 of which were conducted with leaders of non-Quebec groups) the choice of topics was in part up to the interviewee. These groups were selected for the particular viewpoints their representatives could offer to the research, rather than for their representativeness.

Typology

In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate the principal goal of their group using the following definitions:

1. welfare groups: helping the needy;

2. interest groups: defending the common interests of a group;

3. advocacy groups: defending a cause which would necessiate changes in society;

4. service groups: providing specific services to persons or groups in need of them;

5. self-help groups: allowing people with common problems to help one another;

6. charitable groups: promoting humanism, the arts, good citizenship, personal development.

This typology corresponds more to the orientation of the groups than to their activities. Thus, a group could define itself as advocacy (defending a cause) although its principal activity was that of offering a service. This distinction should be kept in mind. The questionnaire respondents chose their own classification under one of these headings; for purposes of the telephone survey, the researcher assigned a classification. Overall, the respondents were distributed as follows: welfare groups: 9%; interest groups: 18%; advocacy groups: 7%; service groups: 26%; self-help groups: 14%; charitable groups: 15%; miscellaneous: 5%; service clubs: 3%; and citizens' groups: 2%. The latter two types were only used in the telephone survey; the groups in these two categories were reclassified in calculating some data.

The data were analysed principally in relation to this typology.

Characteristics of the Organizations

- New Orientations

More than one-quarter of the groups which replied were less than five years old, and more than half were less than 10 years old.

During the past four years, volunteerism has developed in particular in the form of   self-help group and advocacy group types in the areas of the status of women, senior citizens, housing, communications and labour.

This orientation towards relatively new volunteer groups corresponds to a new motivation on the part of the volunteer: 90% of the survey respondents stated that the volunteer's motivation is no longer one of charity but one of a desire to participate in changing things in society. The volunteer is less likely to commit himself to long-term action. He prefers a short-term commitment to an activity with precise objectives the results of which will contribute to change in a visible and permanent way in a social situation deemed unacceptable. More than one-quarter of the relatively new groups (4 - 6 years old) devote more than 75% of their activities to a cause requiring social or political change.

A majority of the leaders of volunteer groups think that the spirit of mutual help and charity is declining in society. More than half also consider that people's willingness to tackle what concerns them is on the increase in this same society.

In general, it appears that the welfare, interest and

service groups have a fairly pessimistic view of the situation. They are comparatively the least likely to consider that the spirit of mutual help, charity and desire for self-determination is increasing. We should add that they are also the least likely to consider that people's participation in voluntary groups is on the rise, whereas the advocacy and self-help groups, and the most protest-oriented groups, are most likely to believe this participation to be on the rise.

In summary, volunteerism is now more likely to occur in groups of the advocacy and self-help types, whereas previously it was more likely to occur in service, interest and welfare groups. This corresponds to the perception of the tendencies expressed by the groups themselves, responding to aspirations toward self-determination and participation in social change.

- Special features of date of formation and response rate

The responding groups which were set up in 1968 or 1969 were half as numerous as those begun in the two preceding, or the two following, years. Among those groups established in 68-69, none devotes the least effort to advocacy, whereas for all the other two-year formation date classes from 1961 to 1976, more than 30% of the groups devote more than 30% of their activities to advocacy. The years 1968 and 1969 were marked by the creation of many volunteer and advocacy movements.

This special feature of classification by date of formation (first recorded in Quebec) leads to three hypotheses, and takes one back to a period whose social consequences have

rarely been analysed, the Fall of 1970 and the War Measures Act.

The years 68-69 marked the culmination of a period during which, in Quebec, citizen participation was particularly promoted by the government through animation and education programs (BAEQ and TEVEC, to take only two examples), as well as through volunteer social animators. The first hypothesis would explain the lack of respondents and the absence of protest groups for the years 68-69 by a transfer of volunteers and advocate-volunteers toward spontaneous but ephemeral structures of participation which did not survive the wave of self-consuming activism of this period.

The second hypothesis is in terms of a modification in the orientation of the advocacy groups (non-militant) in order to change identity at the time, or as a result of the Fall of '70 when a good number of community organizers and group leaders were imprisoned or had their offices and homes searched.

The third hypothesis would be that particularly the new (68-69) and advocacy groups could not survive the War Measures Act, or that the memory of these events is still alive enough that the group leaders refuse to reply to a questionnaire from the federal government, whereas this would not be the case for older groups or those established subsequently. The rate of refusal to reply to the written questionnaires and to the telephone survey, as well as the reasons given for this refusal and the types of groups refusing, tend to confirm the last hypothesis.

. Language of the organizations

Almost one-half (42%) of the Quebec groups say they are

bilingual, majority francophone, and 43% say they are unilingual francophone. In the other francophone communities, unilingual francophone groups are in the majority.

- Geographic size

More than 34% of respondents consider their group to be local in its scope; 27% regional; 29% provincial and 9% interprovincial or pan-Canadian in scope.

- Links among organizations

More than 65% of the respondents are, in one way or another, associated with other groups with similar goals. Ontario groups have the distinction that 37.5% are affiliates. Of the advocacy and charitable groups, 43% and 44% respectively are represented in associations of this type. More than half the service groups are affiliated independently, whereas the welfare groups are more often affiliates than are the others.

- Legal members

Almost one-quarter of the groups count as local members anyone who pays dues; 11% count anyone who registers; 12% count persons with certain characteristics who register; 20% persons with certain characteristics and paying dues; 9% dues-paying associations, and 12% only members of the Board of Directors (questionnaire).

Some 27% of respondent groups do not set a membership fee. More than one-third do, however, require that their members have certain characteristics (sex, age, language, profession, state of health, etc.) and this is true in virtually all types of groups except interest groups, where this require-

ment is imposed by 40% of the groups.

Some 33% of the welfare groups and 20% of the service groups have as members only their Board of Directors. Significantly, this situation never arises among the advocacy groups.

- Recruiting method

More than 44% of the groups indicated they employ word-of-mouth recruiting. Some 60% of service groups use this method, and 22% of them pay for advertising. Some 40% of the self-help groups count on the results of their activities to attract new members.

More than 66% of the groups which declared a drop in their number of members use word-of-mouth as a method of recruiting.

- Members

. Types of members

In all, the 226 groups replying to the telephone survey and questionnaire have more than one million members, and some 65 thousand member associations. More than 52% of the groups have individuals as members, 8% have associations only as members, and 34% have a mixture of the two.

. Change in number of members

More than 40% of the questionnaire respondents consider their membership is on the rise, 52% believe it is stable, and 7% that it is declining. More of the welfare and advocacy groups consider their membership to be increasing; 50% of the former attribute this to recruiting campaigns, and 45% of the latter attribute it to the fact that they satisfy a need. This difference in explanations for the reasons for increased membership is very significant. Finally, the service clubs are seeing

a fairly large decrease in membership. This perception of the change in membership does not correspond to the opinion held by the groups as to general participation by people or volunteer groups. The latter is believed by 38% to be declining, by 43% to be stable, and by 18% to be on the rise. Therefore, there are almost 6 times more respondents who think participation in organizations is declining than there are respondents who consider their membership to be declining. It is probable that the respondents do not necessarily associate numbers of members with participation, although 63% of respondents consider the rate of participation at their general meetings to be stable, 29% rising, and 8% declining.

. Economic status of members

More than 54% of respondents believe their members to be "well-off", 27% economically poorly off, and 4% in poverty. Of welfare, service and charitable groups, 75% judge that their members are well-off or fairly well-off, whereas the   self-help and interest groups judge their membership to be less well-off and economically weak, as do the advocacy groups.

- Volunteers

In the general sense, any member of a volunteer group can be considered to be a volunteer. In a more restricted sense, we consider as volunteers only those persons who, besides the members of the   Board,   carry out unpaid work for the group: they are termed active volunteers.

. Proportion of active volunteers

In total, it appears that the number of active volunteers is around 10 to 15% of total membership. Only 23% of respondents

have no active volunteers among their members; 39% receive
services from non-member active volunteers. The advocacy
groups, along with the welfare groups, make greatest use of
active volunteers. The economic status of the active volunteers
is judged to be slightly better than that of members.

  . Change in number

      Some 16% of the groups consider that their number of
volunteers is declining, 49% that it is stable, and 35% that
it is increasing. More than 30% of Ontario respondents consider
their number of volunteers to be on the decline. There are twice
as many respondents who believe there is a decline in the
number of their volunteers as there are who deem there is a
decline in their membership. A third of the groups who believe
their membership is increasing explain this by the interest their
activities inspire, and 27% explain it by the desire for
commitment to the cause they are defending. These two explanations
correspond to the perception of a volunteerism focussed on
self-determination and social commitment.

  - Clients

      More than 60% of questionnaire respondents state they
have clients to whom they provide services (apart from members).
This is the case for 75% of welfare groups and 72% of service
groups. Interest and charitable groups devote the majority of
their efforts to their members. According to responses, the
welfare groups have the largest clientele.

  . Numbers

      Close to 30% of the groups have more than a thousand
clients of which 11% have over five thousand. It is difficult to

estimate the total number of clients - or even to calculate
an approximate number by extrapolation, taking into account
the sample involved. In total, the 146 respondent groups provide
services to more than 150,000 persons besides their members.

. Change in number

The change in clientele corresponds to the change in
membership: 52% of the groups consider it to be rising, 41%
to be stable, 6% to be decreasing. Charitable, militant and
self-help groups believe their clientele is increasing.
The welfare and service groups are the respondents who think
their clientele is decreasing. Increasing clientele is explained
by 25% of respondents as due to the quality of the service
offered, and by 25% as due to an increase in the need to which
the group wishes to respond. Decreasing clientele is explained
by lack of money (50%) and by lack of publicity (50%).

. Services

Of the groups offering a service to clients, close to
50% offer a service of the information-documentation-reference
type. More than 17% offer a specialized service (medical care,
secretariat, psycho-social aid, etc.). The other types of
services offered are: direct material assistance (11%) and
financial aid (17%), organization of sports or cultural recreation
(6%), organization and animation of community groups (6%),
and specialized technical assistance (4%) in communications
or administration, for example.

Structure of the organizations

  - Board

One of the most widely-held opinions among the respondents
in this study (86% of respondents are in agreement) is that

there is a "volunteer jet set", an elite which has a great deal
of power and which is fairly conservative, made up of a restric-
ted number of persons who accumulate positions on volunteer
group boards. This opinion is not without foundation. Some
46% of respondents state that some, 19% that several, 17% that
most, and 7% that all, members of their board are also board
members of another volunteer group.

In 75% of the groups, the board is selected by a general
meeting of members, and in 10% they are coopted by the board
members themselves. One quarter of the welfare groups proceed
by cooption; 42% of the groups using cooption are service groups.

About 64% of 69 telephone survey respondents said they
are completely in agreement (29%) or more or less in agreement
(35%) with the opinion that, in order to obtain funds, it is
better to have well-known figures who are not from the milieu
on the executive of a group than unknown citizens who are local.

We should note that 75% of the groups, with most or all
of their board also occupying other similar positions, receive
federal grants.

- Leaders

Some 70% of the welfare group respondents are over 40
years old, as are 61% of the charitable group respondents. The
advocacy groups (62%) and self-help groups have a majority of
respondents under 40 years of age. Although 42% of them are
over 40, the service group respondents have the lowest average
age.

The spirit of protest diminishes with age. Some 55% of

respondents under thirty years old state that their groups
devote more than 35% of their activities to a commitment to
a social cause; 32% between 30 and 39 years old state the same,
as do 22% of those 40 to 49 years old, and 16% of those over
50.

The spirit of advocacy also diminishes as social status
rises. Some 79% of respondents in the liberal professions state
that their groups devote none of their activities to promoting
social change, whereas 65% of managers, 60% of sales people,
48% of teachers, 47% of those with degrees in the humanities,
and 27% of non-specialized employees say the same thing.

.   Employees

One-third of the groups replying to the questionnaire
have no employees; 25% have fewer than three; 17% have between
4 and 7; 14% between 8 and 12; and 10% more than 13. The
service groups have the greatest number of employees.

-   Activities

Over the past few years, on the whole, about 20% of the
groups have seen a decline in their activities. Some 5% have
in fact stopped or decreased some of their activities without
increasing or starting up others; some 15% of the groups have
decreased more than they have increased their activities.

Nearly 20% of the groups have neither increased nor
decreased their activities overall.

Finally, 60% of the groups have experienced an increase
in activities; 37% a slight one, and 23% a sizeable one, that
is, their activities have increased generally, and in addition
new ones have been created.

The welfare, advocacy and self-help groups have experienced the highest percentage decrease in activities, whereas the interest and service groups have seen the biggest increases. Paradoxically, the types of groups which consider they have experienced an increase in their membership and clientele (advocacy, self-help), have been more likely to decrease their activities than the types of groups which consider their membership and clientele to be stable or declining (service, interest groups). Membership is not the most decisive factor in explaining the groups' vitality.

- Funding

According to the questionnaire replies from the 146 groups which responded, the overall percentage distribution of sources of funds is as follows:

38% self-financing (membership dues, members' gifts, sales of supplies, investments);

36% government financing (federal-provincial-local) and

26% public financing (individual or united campaigns, foundations).

In absolute dollar terms, however, the public funding represents 50% of the groups' funds; government funding represents 27% and self-financing 23%.

The percentage of funds from provincial and federal governments averages 19% and 15% respectively, though in dollar terms these contributions represent only 12% and 8% respectively of the groups' funds.

It may also be noted that the maximum amount received by the top 50% of the groups receiving provincial funds is $15,000, whereas it is only $9,000 for the top 50% of groups

receiving federal funds. More than 44% of respondents count provincial funds amongst their sources; 36% receive federal funds; 36% of the groups draw more than 50% of their funds from government sources, and 60% of the groups cite at least one government source of funds.

Thus it may be seen that for at least 36% of the groups, government funds are of vital importance.

In Quebec, 12% of the groups receive more than 75% of their funds from the provincial government; about 9% draw between 50 and 75% and 11% between 25 and 49%. Thus 32% receive more than 25% of their resources from the Quebec government.

Outside Quebec, only one group receives more than 50% of its funds from its provincial government.

Of outside-Quebec francophone groups, 48% receive federal funds and 26% receive more than 50% of their funds from this source. Within Quebec, 31% of the groups receive funds from Ottawa, and only 10% receive more than 50% of their funds from this source.

A comparison of the data from this research with that of Prof. Cooperstock of the University of Toronto, who carried out a similar study on anglophone voluntary groups, reveals that 13% fewer francophone groups in Quebec cite the federal government as a source of funds. About 3% fewer non-Quebec francophone groups (Ontario excepted) cite the federal government among their sources of funds than do anglophone groups in the same regions. For non-Quebec francophone groups, the federal government takes first place among sources of funds not because its contributions to francophone groups are more numerous than to

anglophone ones, but because provincial funds are lacking among the resources of the francophone groups.

This comparison also sheds new light on the fairly widespread belief that the anglophone groups draw a larger share of their resources from non-governmental resources than do the francophone groups in Quebec. In fact, the reverse appears to apply.

One cannot be too categorical with regard to funds from private corporations. It is possible that respondents included these with funds gained through financial campaigns. If such were not the case, however, the funds from private corporations would represent a mere 1.2% of the groups' funds, and 2.6% of fund sources.

The interest groups are most dependent on sources of funds which they do not control (governments, federated appeals). The service groups are also quite dependent on these same types of sources of funds.

The advocacy and self-help groups have the most recourse to government funding. However, the former ensure a balance between government funds, dues and participation charges. The welfare groups garner financing through financial campaigns and sales of goods; they are the most independent financially.

However, the welfare (45%) and advocacy (50%) groups are the ones which count most on individual contributions for their funds, and think their financial resources are declining, whereas the interest groups (43%) and service groups (43%) think they are on the rise. The self-help groups believe they are stable. The more a group depends on its members or on individual donations for funds, the greater the tendency for its funds to be on the

decline. All the welfare groups which have received a federal grant consider there has been a decline in federal funds among their resources, whereas the interest groups are the most likely to judge there has been an increase, and the self-help groups to judge the situation to be stable.

The groups most heavily dependent on federated appeals and government funds are those most likely to judge there has been a rise in their financial resources; they are also the ones which are least likely to be decreasing their activities, but also the least likely to create new ones.

Overall, 28% of the groups believe their financial resources are declining, 34% believe they are stable, and 38% believe they are rising.

On average, the interest and service groups have the largest annual resources; between 40 and 45% have resources of over $100,000. Overall, this is the case for only 36% of the groups. More than half of the groups have less than $50,000 per year available to them; 25% have less than $5,000. Non-Quebec francophone groups have much lower resources than do their Quebec counterparts. Some 10 Quebec groups have yearly resources in excess of $500,000 and 5 have over one million dollars.

More than 52% of the groups say they encounter some, or great, difficulty in obtaining the funds required for their activities.

- Grants

Some 50% of the questionnaire respondents indicated they had no specific policy regarding federal grants. More than 50% have requested grants over the past few years; 28% of these requests have been granted, 72% have not. The difficulty most

often encountered in these grant requests (29% of cases) is
the lack of realism and of correspondence of standards to the
groups' real needs. Some 82% of the 68 respondents to the
telephone survey expressed agreement with the opinion that the
government frequently shows itself to be forward-looking in
its grant policies, but that the norms followed mean that it
is impossible to do what is needed locally. This lack of
correspondence between norms and local needs is one of the most
important factors in the groups' lack of satisfaction and is
doubtless the main reason why recommendations relate less to
new grants than to a change in attitude and to better relations
between those concerned.

. Subsidized groups

Some 53% of the questionnaire respondents and 50% of
the telephone survey respondents state they have received a
grant during the past five years. Over the last 3 years,
26%, 32% and 38% of the groups replying to the questionnaire
received a grant in 1973, 1974 and 1975 respectively. Finally,
let us recall that the groups citing the federal government as
a source of funds represent 36% of the sample; according to
these data, 18% receive annually renewable grants (representing
36% of the funded groups).

On average, the advocacy groups (49%), service groups (38%),
interest groups (38%) and charitable groups (36%) have benefitted
most from federal grants; 28% of the   self-help groups and
14% of the welfare groups have received grants. Over the past
three years, the largest increase in funded groups has been
among advocacy and   self-help groups. We should note that in

these types of groups, the new areas of interest (women, elderly, family, communication) are predominant and have been the subject of special government attention over the past few years. Beyond the mathematics of the situation, one may see in this that the government is led to fund not only new areas of interest but also new types of volunteer groups.

. Views of grants

According to 68% of survey respondents, when a project runs counter to the economic interests of the establishment, it is never funded. More than 82% of the respondents think that when grants are sought, it is most important to know how to deal with the administration and public servants. The funded groups are more in agreement with this opinion than are the non-funded ones! More than 26% of the questionnaire respondents indicated that, in their view, contacts with public servants are most important in obtaining a grant; 22% believe that the quality of the project presentation is most important; 14% that ability to count on political pressure is most important.

Overall, the data concerning grants seem to indicate that groups do not believe either that the system is corrupt or that there is completely arbitrary favoritism. However, it is considered preferable to have personal contacts with civil servants and a good knowledge of the structures and standards of departments: submitting projects which correspond to departmental priorities; taking into account networks of influence which arise in the departments depending on the individual interests and preoccupations of senior officials, which are often legitimate; and clarifying

the considerations and standards which will guide public
servants in their decisions, and which change with general
policies, specific political situations and senior officials
themselves. Thus, 22% of respondents said that they know
nothing of the considerations guiding the selection of groups
to be funded; 17% thought that the correspondence with government
priorities was the principal factor; 17% that it was the quality
of the project, and 15% the political connections of the
applicant that counted most.

Almost 30% of respondents stated they were not routinely
informed of federal grant possibilities.

Some 81% of the groups informed of these possibilities
by other groups receive grants. It would seem that the groups,
in informing one another, also give each other "contextual"
information which eases the application and identification of
the best route to the granting source.

- Views of political power

Some 69% of respondents stated agreement with the view
that the government is not much influenced by what one thinks
or says, and 74% think that the only way to make the government
budge is to appeal to public opinion. This latter view corresponds
with the fact that the best results obtained in dealings with
governments on issues of public debate were obtained by those
who used the media. More than 59% of survey respondents were
in agreement (27% completely, 32% more or less) in saying that
one can never be too distrustful in dealing with governments.

- View of public administration

Some 77% of survey respondents agreed that the government
treats volunteer groups as amateurs; 75% of questionnaire respondents

said that they were dissatisfied with government policies in their sector and 64% expressed dissatisfaction with their group's influence over policies in their area.

- Satisfaction with the federal government

Some 60% of written questionnaire respondents were generally dissatisfied with the federal government in those areas concerned with grants and grant policies. The four principal areas of dissatisfaction for the relevant volunteer groups are: access to decision-making committees (80% dissatisfied); the explanation for grant refusals (75%); the policies regarding the groups' respective areas of activity (75%); and the clarity of criteria for grants (67%). It is customary to think that francophone applicants for federal government funds are dissatisfied with the language in which they communicate with the government, and that in general there is dissatisfaction with the reports to be supplied, ways of disbursing grant money, the accessibility of public servants. While these aspects do not necessarily elicit satisfaction, they provoke the least dissatisfaction.

In summary, what the groups are most dissatisfied with is the lack of participation in decisions taken concerning their areas of activity, and in a sense, the secretive way in which grant decisions are made: who makes them, and what considerations and criteria are used?

- Self-perception

The daily activities of volunteer groups fall into a number of broad categories; groups in different categories are often not aware of each other. The study's respondents indicate

that their perceptions of volunteer activity are often limited
to their category alone. Six broad categories may be identified:

    <u>social affairs</u>: health, welfare, individual rights and status;

    <u>sports-recreation</u>: amateur sport, cultural leisure activities;

    <u>international</u>: aid to developing countries;

    <u>socio-economic sector</u>: professional associations, unions,
    businessmen's associations, councils for economic development;

    <u>charitable sector</u>: arts, personal development, development of
    knowledge;

    <u>citizens' groups (and political groups)</u>: citizens' committees
    (political parties).

        Within these sectors of activity, groups sometimes
pursue contradictory objectives, adopt the most diverseforms
of organization, and start from ideologies which are sometimes
in conflict. Although some sectors have a certain degree of
coordination or internal organization (the amateur sport and
international sectors, for example), it is nevertheless the case
that most do not have a structure which can represent them,
and that these sectors form more or less closed worlds which are
not aware of each other. Unlike the private sector, the voluntary
sector has no general organization (Chamber of Commerce type)
which can represent it and defend the interests of non-profit
activities ... all the while stating it is not "playing politics".

        Volunteers themselves have great difficulty with the
ambiguity surrounding volunteerism, the more so because ideologies
clash and the groups are often seen as dependent on the public
sector. As regards this latter item, it may be said that the
groups perceive four types of organizations: quasi-governmental,

viewed as outgrowths of government departments; autonomous-
dependent, which depend on government or federated appeal funds
but which show more or less ideological independence in relation
to the grantor of funds; independent, which are financially
self-sufficient; and dissident, which, whether funded or not,
exist on the fringes. This perception which the groups have
influences the degree of cooperation which can exist amongst them.
- Place and social roles in society

     The categorization outlined immediately above also
reflects diverse opinions regarding the place and role the
voluntary groups have, or should have, in society.

     Some 52% of 141 groups responding to the questionnaire
said they have a policy of voicing their opinions in public
debates, while 48% have the opposite policy. Some 51% of the
respondents said they have taken a public position over the
past few years, and 51% said they have made representations to
governments on an issue involved in public debate. While 48%
of the groups said they have a policy of not voicing their
opinions in public debate, 88% of the groups have "helped,
over the past few years, to sensitize a government to certain
problems or situations"... The service groups (57%) and interest
groups (44%) have concentrated their efforts on questions
related to their sector of activities, whereas the welfare
groups (50%) and   self-help groups (33%) have done so on questions
related to civil rights, and the advocacy groups (33%) have
concentrated on peoples' status.

     Some 60% of respondents consider that they are not involved
in a cause whose primary goal is to bring about social or

political change; 12% think they devote less than 30% of their

activities to this type of cause; 15% say they devote between

30 and 85% of their activities to this and 13% more than 85%

of their activities. Only 14% of the charitable groups, 17% of

the interest groups, and 18% of the service groups devote more

than 30% of their activities to this type of cause, whereas 30%

of the self-help groups, 32% of the welfare groups, and 73% of

the advocacy groups do so.

        The type of financing has an important relation to the

extent to which groups are "advocate" in nature. Only 15% of

the groups which are funded to the extent of more than 75%

from appeal campaigns devote more than 30% of their activities

to a cause. This compares with 24% whose funds come, to the

extent of more than 75%, from members and 46% of those whose

funds come from governments. The government-funded (75% or

more) groups devote the greatest share of their activities

to bringing about social change; this may seem paradoxical,

but it would also appear that social change cannot be sustained

by public funds (appeal campaigns) nor by members' financing.

Social change usually implies controversy, or at least sensitization

to minority rights (in number and in status). The large appeal

campaigns cannot sustain groups whose activities lead to

controversy; they risk losing contributions, and thus harming

the overall set of groups being supported. The last United

Appeal campaign in Toronto provides an example of this: its

previous support for a group demanding liberalization of the

abortion law seriously complicated its campaign. In addition,

if a group represents people who are a minority in number and

status, it is quite probable that it will not be able to obtain
the funds necessary for meaningful action over a reasonably
long period from its members alone.

Some 70% of questionnaire respondents believe that the
groups which carry out activities designed to defend a cause
or to bring about social or political change should receive
federal government grants; 11% are opposed, and 19% are undecided.
That is, at least half the respondents who are not involved in
causes of this type are nevertheless in agreement that this type
of group should be funded.

More than 86% of telephone survey respondents said they
are in agreement that voluntary groups should speak out publicly
more often.

- Needs

Apart from financial needs, it is the lack of volunteers
(41%) and volunteers with specific qualifications (17%) which
is the principal need of the groups at this time. Their
greatest need, in addition to financial resources, in order
to develop is for permanent employees (28%) and volunteers (10%).
Looking to the future, 40% of the groups consider that the main
problem they will encounter over the next few years will be
financial; 23% feel it will be to find replacements, and
10% that it will be the lack of motivation on people's part
to accomplish the type of activities the group is currently
undertaking.

- Francophone-anglophone relations

Over 67% of the telephone survey respondents were in
agreement with the opinion that even if they can express their

point of view, francophones are rarely understood within
pan-Canadian groups, and that francophone and anglophone
objectives are often divergent. Almost two-thirds of the
same respondents think that relations have improved between
francophone and anglophone members over the past few years,
whereas in the general population only 22% of people believe
there has been an improvement in francophone-anglophone relations,
and 43% think there has been a deterioration.

- Quebeckers' relations with anglophones and with the federal
  government

Almost 60% of survey respondents thought that problems
between Quebec members and pan-Canadian groups are not easily
resolved, and 70% of Quebec respondents thought that priorities
of pan-Canadian groups rarely coincide with theirs. More than
55% of Quebec respondents were in agreement that it is always
more difficult for Quebeckers than it is for other Canadians
to obtain grants from Ottawa, and 53% agreed that in certain
sectors of voluntary action federal grants are not very well
regarded. An almost equal number, 53%, of Quebec respondents
disagreed with the opinion that federal grants allow Ottawa
to exercise a little more control in Quebec, and 57% believe
that, because of political ideology, certain Quebec groups
do not avail themselves of possibilities for federal grants.
Finally, 75% of Quebec respondents believe that in certain areas,
obtaining a grant from Ottawa means that grants from Quebec
will be unobtainable, or very difficult to obtain.

- Grant priorities

More than 77% of questionnaire respondents felt that
it would be important for them for grants to be available for

existing problems, community education, operational costs
(other than salaries), and for research. These are the four
types of grants which seem to have priority. The fact that the
groups hope first to be able to continue their activities
without having to comply with government priorities and programs,
to develop their area of influence by means of community
education, and to rationalize their activities through research,
which would also permit them to augment the content of their
community education program, provides the context for these
priorities.

- Opinion regarding granting methods and possible services

Over 68% of respondents thought that the authority
making grants should be regionalized. More than 65% of respondents
believed that the federal government should create a Canadian
Centre for Voluntary Action. The majority of groups (64%)
stated that they would use the space and resources which the
government might possibly make available to them in its regional
offices. Some 67% of respondents thought that more publicity
should be forthcoming about grants provided and the groups
receiving them.

The majority (65%) of respondents did not favour implementing
a "matching grant" policy. Fewer than 50% of the groups thought
it would be useful to them if a civil servant were "loaned" to
them for a certain length of time, and more than half the
respondents said that training for civil servants concerned with
volunteer groups should first concentrate on the acquisition and
development of human qualities and of a less "administrative"
attitude. Nearly half the respondents thought that, in the

area of taxes, a policy similar to that for contributions to federal political parties would be more of an incentive for donations than current policy. Nearly 60% of respondents were in agreement with the principle of a tax deduction corresponding to time worked as a volunteer. As for general policy, more than 66% of respondents said that rather than taking charge itself of the services offered by volunteer groups, the government should increase the number of service contracts with them.

- General recommendations

. Ending secretiveness

Better information, not only on grants available but also on general government policies and on the considerations and standards which guide grant policies. It is to be hoped that the government administration will get rid of the secretiveness in which it is presently swathed...

. Not only launch, but also support, programs

The groups considered that the usual basic grant duration of one year is insufficient, particularly where new programs are concerned. In their view, this situation has the double consequence of use of government funds during the program's least profitable phase and the disillusionment of volunteers who, after having gone through the running-in stages of the program, no longer find support for continuing their activity. Such activity could attain adequate self-sufficiency to disengage from government support following funding for   the first two or three years.

. Improved coordination: concertation

Improved coordination among the various branches of

government, and also among federal, provincial and local
governments as well as between the latter and the voluntary
groups, is considered a priority. The voluntary groups have
the feeling that, with improved information and frequent
consultation, government involvement and voluntary action would
gain through economizing on resources and increased efficiency.
What is involved, say the groups, is not only obtaining funds,
but above all the achieving of well-organized projects which
fulfill real needs.

    . Give new recognition to voluntary action and to the citizen

        As we have seen, the groups think they are treated like
amateurs. They also think that participation in voluntary groups
is on the decline. For these two reasons, they hope that the
government will act to create greater recognition of the value
of voluntary action in the eyes of the public service, the
politicians, and the general public. This reappraisal of value,
which seems to be the most important ingredient for establishing
improved relations between the voluntary groups and government
administration, implies a change in attitude on the government's
part toward, more generally, the value of citizen participation
in "public life" in the broadest sense.

Conclusions

    During the interviews, the group leaders experienced some
difficulty in making general recommendations beyond suggestions
of an economic or normative nature. They are divided between
their desire for important changes in government attitudes,

their distrust of political powers, and their perception of
an urgent necessity for action which they would like to carry
out within a framework of mutual cooperation and rational
coordination. There is no belief either in the democratic
efficiency or in the administrative efficiency of current
political institutions, but changing them seems so improbable
and so far beyond the voluntary sector that possible changes
are never mentioned. The perception of the relation between
government administration and the voluntary sector does not
differ very much between groups which effect social change
and others, or between groups funded by grants and others.
The relation between the private and the public constitutes
the fundamental question; at the centre of this debate is the
value of citizen participation. The voluntary action groups
feel powerless to begin the debate, and satisfy themselves
with administrative relations with governments, or with
advocacy which concerns only their sector of activity.

The fact remains that, for the voluntary sector, the
first way in which the government could lend it its support
would be in changing its attitude toward the sector, and
promoting its value in the eyes of the public and the govern-
ment administration through a new image of the volunteer.
The government would assist the voluntary sector thereby to
mobilize more volunteer efforts and participation, and thus
to solve its need for human resources by changing its image;
relations with the public administration would thereby become
easier.

As regards to non-Quebec francophone voluntary sector, the key way in which government can provide support is through its policies concerning survival of the French Fact (rather than bilingualism), and of the francophone communities.